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Murther, Murther.

Or,

A bloody Relation how *Anne Hamton*

dwelling in Weſtminster nigh London, by poyſon murthered her deare husband, Sept. 1641. being aſſiſted and counſelled thereunto by *Margeret Harwood.*

For which they were both committed

to Gaole, and at this time wait for a tryall.

Women love your owne husbands, as Christ doth the Church.

Printed at London for *Tho: Bates*, 1641.

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A bloody Relation of *Anne Hamton*, who poisoned her husband at WESTMINSTER.

Gentle Reader.

IT is not my purpose to make thee now laugh, but if possible it be to be sad, not to rejoice but lament, not to be frolic, but to dissolve into fountains of tears, because a daughter of Jerusalem hath committed an abomination. Hearken to me you that be wives, and give attendance you which as yet are unmarried, regard the words of Saint Paul which commands that every wife should love her own husband as Christ the church, not to be high-minded towards him, but humble, not to be self-willed, but diligent, not to be like a strange woman, which wandereth abroad in the twilight to get a prey, but to be constant and loving to him, for why? ye be both of one flesh.

A man must forsake his father, mother, brethren, and sisters, to cleave to his own wife, and

so likewise the wife for the husband. But I must tell of one who would never agree to any such pious matter.

Before I come to which relation I cannot abstain myself from exclamation, let all the forests wherein fierce lions are contained be joined in one, and privy search made, to know if ever female did the male destroy; oh no; for though by nature they be fierce and bloody, yet doth nature so much govern them, that those which are couples, be linked in friendship, never disagree. Oh then thou savage woman, why unto blood wert thou addicted, as to destroy thy loving and kind husband; the relation of which, shall be divulged throughout this universe.

In the parish of Saint Margarets, Westminster, dwelleth one *Anne Hamton*, in the house of *Margaret Harwood*; this *Anne Hamton* had a husband which like a loving man indeed delighted in nothing more but to see his wife pleasant; for he would often say my wife being troubled it behoveth me not to be at rest, she being pleasant I ought to be joyful: But she, most unkind woman, was of a contrary disposition; for she at her own house, would take an occasion to be merry, when the greatest mischief had befallen him. He was a very laborious man, but she, a light housewife, when he was working she would be gossiping, with one young fellow or other, or else with such women as were

like to herself: never was she more joyful than when she was out of her good husband's company: what her husband got by taking pains, she spent by taking her pleasure: his money being thus consumed, and his goods wasted, he upon a time spoke to her after this manner.

Wife, what do you mean to do? how dost thou intend to live? my money you spend, which I get hardly, my goods you waste, you never get the worth of a joint stool, my company you hate, you must have better. O wife, wife, take counsel by me thy hitherto loving husband, forsake that company which hate not thy body, but soul, do not drink healths to thine own confusion, nor with so greedy an appetite swallow thine own destruction: repent in time of thy wickedness lest when thou thinkest thyself in security, the Lord doth cut thee off, and what will then become of thy poor soul; love me thy husband, hate those which entice thee to wickedness, trust not to their smiling countenances, for in their hearts do lie hid nothing but abominations. If thou wilt (I say) have my love, hate such, or else never more think to enjoy, that which as yet you have always had.

What harm was there in all this which he spake unto her? But notwithstanding she forsooth took it in distaste, and giving him a scolding reply, she left the room, and went to her companion in mis-

chief, *Margaret Harwood*, which was her Landlady, to whom she revealed the secrets of her heart, saying, that her husband was an enemy to good fellowship, and continually wrangled and brawled at her, because she affected it. In which she lied, for he always spoke in a very loving manner unto her, except she overmuch provoked him.

Moreover she said that she should never be in quiet until by some way or other she were shifted of him.

The devil finding an occasion how to accomplish a mischievous intent, always makes use of it, he knows how to please every ones wicked humour. Wherefore he tempted the Landlady with bloody cogitations, for she hearing her Ningles[1] unjust complaint, she cried out that it was her own fault, for letting such an abject villain to live; hang him, cut his throat, or poison him, for he is not fit to live upon the earth amongst good fellows. To condescend to whose counsel, she seemed very unwilling, but at length the devil got the better of her, and then she did agree to poison him. And for the same intent she went and got five drams of poison, enough to have destroyed ten men, and mixed it amongst his food, which he no sooner had taken,

[1] NINGLES—*i.e.*, Ningle, a contracted form of *mine ingle*—a favourite, a friend. A more correct reading would be:—"For she hearing her *Ningle* so unjustly complained of, cried out," &c.

but that he presently did swell very much, which she perceiving, did run to her Landlady, who asked her how much she had given him: she replied, five drams; well done, said she, if five will not be enough, ten shall, and thereupon they went up to see him, but he was then burst. Then did they both dissemble a lamentable cry, which caused the neighbours to come in to see what was the matter, where they did behold such a woeful spectacle as was sufficient to exhaust tears from the driest eye composed of Pumice stone; for their did they see his nails quite peeled off, his hands did seem only like two great boils, his belly seemed as if hot irons had been thrust into it, his visage was so much defaced by the quick operation of the scalding poison, that had they not well known the body, they would have sworn it not to have been the man which they came to visit: they all easily perceived that he was poisoned.

A Chirurgeon being sent for, ripped up his body, and found the poison lying round about his heart. As also there was found poison in a paper in the window; the Chirurgeon calling for a Venice glass put the same therein, which immediately broke the glass.

Wherefore they sent for an officer, and apprehended upon suspicion both his wife and Landlady,

whose consciences cannot but confess that they washed both their hands in his innocent blood.

They are both in the Gatehouse prison of Westminster, nigh London, expecting a day of trial, which time will not be long; till when I rest; then (gentle reader) shalt thou have by God's permittance a more perfect relation.

FINIS.

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